

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, June 8. 1708.

WELL, Gentlemen, I have done with my Exhortation about your choosing *Tories*; your Elections are near over, and if you have been mad, you must reap as you have sown; if you have done well, you will fear no Envy; if you have done ill, you will deserve no Pity; the Issue must determine the thing.

But I cannot quit this Affair of Elections, before I take Notice a little of the general Behaviour of the Gentry and Persons of Quality, in order to their Election—What is become of all our Comedians? Ah, *Rochester, Shadwel, Orway, Oldham*, where is your Genius? Certainly, no Subject ever deserv'd so much to be expos'd, nothing can be so fruitful in Banter, or deserved more to be ridicul'd.

Here's a Knight of the Shire, and he rides round the Country to get Votes, and he is to be at such a Town on the Market Day to meet with the Country Freeholders. Two Country Men are going to that Market, and they hear the Great Man will be there, and they fall to talk of it as they go along; One's a *Grazier*, and has a *Cow to sell*; the Other's a *Farmer*, and he has a *Sow and Piggs*, and they fall to dialogue it as they go along.

Grazier. Neighbour *J.....*, what they say Sir *Thomas* will be at the Town to day.

Farmer. What to speak about his Election I warrant ye, is 'nt it?

Gra. Ay, ay, zooks we mun all vote for him, they say, his Bayly was with all the Tenants

Tenants t'other Day, and kiss'd all our Wives round, and said, my Landlord sent him; but they say, he shall come and kiss 'em himself, before they'll speak for him, they won't take it at second hand.

Far. Your good Wives know their Landlord well enough; was it not he that kiss'd Farmer *M...*'s Wife, and put two Guineas into her Mouth, which serv'd to stop her Mouth, and make her Husband speak?

Gra. My Landlord does all he can to get in, and yet he never could get half his own Tenants to vote for him.

Far. He's too close fist'd, he does nothing for poor Folks all the time, but just when he wants to be chosen.

Gra. Well, well, we must make him pay for it then, and he shall pay for it, if he gets my Vote for all I am his Tenant; I pay him Rent enough for his Farm, and if he don't like it, I have a little Farm of my own, I cannot live without him; if he comes to speak to me, I'll be very plain with 'n.

Far. In troth so will I too; but what shall we say to him, will he give us any Money?

Gra. I can't tell; but if he won't, Sir *William* will, and he sets up against him; the Greyhound is his House, and he spends his Money like a Prince; I'm resolv'd to go there, I know his Steward *Jessery*.

Far. Nay, I'll go to them both; a Body may get drink enough at both Houses, and Money too they say; I'll e'en get it of both of them, as long as it is to be had.

Gra. No, no, *M...*, that is not fair.

Far. Fair, they are Rogues to give Money at all; if they will give their Money away, any Body may take it, mayn't they? I don't steal it from them.

Gra. But they give it to get your Vote, and you promise to vote for them, and you must cheat one of them.

Far. That's your Mistake now, Neighbour, for *Jessery* was with me yesterday, and I am to have two Guineas of his Masters to day, and I made him no positive Promise, but put him thus; why Mr. *Jessery*, Sir *William* knows, I won't be against him, leave the rest to me; he pretends to understand me, and I shall promise just the same to Sir *Thomas* to day, if I can get two Gul-

neas more; and then when the Day comes, I'll e'en stay at home, and vote for no Body, and a'nt I as good as my Word?

By this Part of the Story Gentlemen may see how they are used, when they go underhand to bribe and buy Voices from the Country; they debauch the very Morals of the People, gull and cheat themselves, see themselves Bubbles to the poorest Clown, and are bound to stand still, and tho' they know it, say nothing.

Here are two Gentlemen in a Town on the Market Day, there they take up each of them a publick House; first the Alehouse Keeper, he bumboosels them, and charges all the Ale he has in the House twice over, so much a Barrel, whether 'tis drunk out or no; if his Worship does not like it, he does him wrong, for he has brought in all his Customers to vote for him; and Sir *William* sent his Gentleman to him, and would he but have espoused his Interest, he offer'd him all that, and ten Guineas for the Use of his House.

Well, there's no disputing, there's 150 l. to pay, and there is no Remedy.

Well, then here sits Sir *Thomas* all the Market Day, the Rooms are all full; here's two or three Butchers, there half a dozen Firmiers; in another a Gang of such a Townsmen; and Up-Stairs a Parcel of their Wives; Sir *Thomas* has his Servants up and down the Town, and in every Gang among them fishing for Votes, and drinking with them; now he goes into this Room, then to that; here a drunken Butcher, gorg'd with his Ale, spues in his Worships Presence, there a Clown belches in his Face; here Farmer *Q.....*'s Wife huffs his Steward, because Sir *Thomas* was not civil to her, that is, spoke to her to have her Husbands Vote, but did not put two Guineas into her Hand, and tells him, her Sons are both Freeholders, and what does Sir *Thomas* mean? There's an old Woman, she's out of Humour, and a going away, and what's the Matter? — No, nothing's the Matter, but my Dame goes away, and won't promise the Steward any thing; well, she's quite lost, and the Reason is never known, till it comes out among the Gossips in the Neighbourhood.

hood, and the Steward hears of it, that Sir Thomas spoke to her in the Street, and did not salute her Gentlewomanship, whereas he had killed all the Goodies and Gammar in the upper Room; this Scene is at the Sign of the *Red Lyon*, Sir Thomas ——— knows where.

Shall we go over the Way now to Sir William —, he is at the *Greybond*, as the Farmer told us just now; and pray Friends take it with you as you go, that this Farce now has the Misfortune to be so true a Jest, that really I can hardly find in my Heart to laugh at it.

Sir William is a jolly, frank, open-handed Gentleman, whether *Whig* or *Tory*, I don't examine, that is not to the Purpose here; the Lesson is to them all, and either may make use of the Moral, while it would be their Wisdom to let alone the Fable.

Coming into the *Greybound Inn* at —, you find it a large House built on all Sides of a Square-Yard, or in our common Dialect, *all round the Square*, the Rooms and Galleries are all full of the Country People, and several Tables in the Yard, some quite drunk, some three-quarters speed, all drinking, stinking, roaring, swearing, sleeping, spuing, &c. and all for Sir William.

At a Table on the right hand under a Shed, on the *North East* Corner of the Wall, just by a Kennel where the Fox is chain'd, I am the more particular, because perhaps Sir William may want those Directions to remember it by, tho' one would think he should not neither. — At this Table sits about half a dozen Country Fellows, Butchers, Tanners, Farmers, and *like like*, drunk enough, you may be sure.

Sir William, as he visits the Rooms where his Freeholders are drinking, comes out into the Gallery, and they spy him; then first Huzza, and all upon their Feet shouting, a —, a —, naming his Name, Sir William salutes them from the Gallery, and down they sit to it again; by and by one Dr. drunker than the rest, he calls out to Sir William, that he drank his Health, then there's another Bow due from Sir William: But Sir William, says the Clown aloud, won't you come and drink with us? and

then he wraps out a great W——ds, won't your Worship come and drink one Cup with your honest Freeholders, we are all Freeholders, and swears again by his Maker, and again all Freeholders, B—G—D—yea, Sir William, all Freeholder, won't your Worship drink with us?

Well, Sir W. honest Gentleman, he does not care for it; but he says, Ay, ay, Gentlemen, I'll come to you presently, and then he sends one of his Stewards or Agents, bids him go to them. Who a P—— sent you to us Goodman Gentleman, you are a Steward, you are a Slave; bring us Sir William or the young Esq; d——ye, we scorn to drink with any Body but your Master, Sirrah— Well, Gentlemen, says the Steward, for he must not offend them, my Master will wait on you; then another begins with two or three Hiccups and Belches, why look you Mr.— to the Steward, we are all Men that have something of our own, Man, and if Sir W. won't drink with us, *look ye Sir*, d' ye see, and he won't drink wy us, *that is*, and it Sir William, *that is*, thinks himself, d' ye see, too good to drink, *that is*, with poor Country Folks, d' ye see, why then I'll tell ye, that Sir, d' ye see, we'll vote none, *that is*, come Tom, we'll be gone; No, pray Gentlemen, pray Gentlemen, my Master is coming—Away he goes and tells Sir William, they are a going away, if his Worship does not come down.

Down comes Sir William—, and O then they are as joyful as Drunkenness and Oaths will let them be, and his Worship must sit down; and could I but give you a Picture now of the Baronet among the *Boots*, on one hand of him sits a Butcher greasier than the Master of the Company, fat as a Bullock of 12 l. Price, drunk as a Drum, drivelling like a Boar, foaming at Mouth with a Pipe in his Jaws, and being in the open Yard, holds it so that the Wind carries the Smoke directly in Sir William's Face; on the other hand sits a Tanner, not so fat, but twice as drunk as t'other, every now and then he lets a great Fart, and first drinks his Worship's Health, then spues upon his Stockings; a third gets up from the lower End of the Table to make a Leg, and drink to his Worship; then comes so near him to give him

and to give him the Flagon, that making his reeling Bow, he spills some of the Beer upon him, gives a great Belch in his Face, and so scratching his Head, waits till his Worship must drink after him, and give him the Pot again; and making his Leg again a little too low, runs forward, being as the Sailors call too much by the Head, and over sets Sir William's Chair and all, and falls upon him, the rest get all up to help him up; and two or three of them dragging their Brother Beast off him, Sir William gets up himself, and his Man is fain to help them up one after another — Well, then his Worship sits, there's no getting away from them; if he offers to stir away, what won't your Worship drink with us, we'll all vote for you, then a Hiccup and an Oath by their Maker, and every Word interleaved with Damnation and Curses — Well, at last comes in the Farmer, we talk'd of with his Sow and Piggs; ho M..., M..., you Dog cries the Butcher, for belike he was a Chairman, here come hither, here is Sir William — (I cannot foul my Paper, nor your Mouths, Readers, with their Oaths and Blasphemies, but your Imagination will suggest them) Come hither, M..., you Dog, come hither; then the Tanner begins with an Oath to Sir William, that's a Freeholder, an't like your Worship, we'll make him vote for your Worship, and he was always for Sir Thomas, we'll make him be for you — Come hither, M..., you Dog, won't ye drink with Sir William — Huzza, a Dottrel, a Dottrel, or a any thing, *that's instead of his Worships Name, by the way.*

Well, M.... comes and makes his Leg — and Sir William speaks to him for his Vote. Ha, ha, an't like your Worship, I han't promised any Body yet; I am as like as another not to be against your Worship, ha ha. And what hast got there Goodman M..., Says Sir William, what hast brought to Market? a Sow and Piggs, an't please your Worship to buy them, it will do me a Kindness; the Butcher whispers Sir William, buy them, buy them, your Worship shall be sure of him then; well, says Sir William, buy them for me — If you give him a little

more than they are worth, you understand the thing; up gets the Butcher, let's see them, M..., what shall Sir William give you for them? — M..., why I'll have three Mark for them — No, no, look you M..., that is too much; but you know Sir William stands for our Shire, you shall vote for him, and he shall take the Sow and Piggs, and leave the Price to us — Well, well, I an't against him, I'll give you my Word for that — *So they make the Bargain,* the Butcher come back, Sir William I have bought the Sow and Piggs, and he promises; your Worship must give him three Mark for them; Sir William orders the Steward to pay the Money; the Sow and Piggs are worth about half the Money, the Fellow promises he won't be against Sir William, but never promises to vote for him; goes away after that to Sir Thomas, gets *Ditto* of him, and keeps his Word with both by voting for no Body.

I could carry this Scene on to the most for did monstrous Excesses, to which I have been too much an Eye-Witness; but I leave the Gentlemen to ask'd with Boors stooping to all the meanest, and vilest, and most indecent things imaginable, nay, till one of the Brutes calls to him to reach the Chamber-Pot over the Table to him; but this beastly Doing is enough to shew the Gentlemen their own Picture in little, when their Interest guides them to seek an Opportunity of getting into a Parliament House. What Men that can stoop to this are fit for, when they come there, is a Question admits of a farther Enquiry.

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